

Annual Performance Plan
for
Weir Farm National Historic Site

FISCAL YEAR 2003
OCTOBER 1, 2002 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2003



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Annual Performance Plan

for

Weir Farm National Historic Site

Approved: _____
Randy W. Turner, Superintendent

Date: _____

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I. INTRODUCTION

About This Plan

This is the annual performance plan (APP) for Weir Farm National Historic Site, a unit of the National Park System, administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. It covers Federal fiscal year 2003 (October 1, 2002 - September 30, 2003), one year of our five year (2001-2005) Strategic Plan period. This plan includes our mission statement, derived from the legislation establishing and affecting this park. It contains our goals organized under goal categories, mission goals (the "in perpetuity" goals that encompass everything we do), and the quantified, measurable long-term goals from our five-year strategic plan. The focus in this plan, however, is on our annual goals and what we plan to accomplish this fiscal year.

The content and organization of this plan relate to the process established by the National Park Service under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) [see following sections]. Additional copies of this Plan, or copies of our strategic plan, are available by visiting or writing park headquarters at 735 Nod Hill Road, Wilton, CT. 06897. We welcome questions and comments, which should be addressed to the superintendent at this address.

Each annual goal is results --or outcome-- oriented, objective, quantified and measurable, with performance measures built into each goal statement. A "Strategies" section describes the organization, facilities, and financial resources available to achieve the plan's goals. The "Key External Factors" shows those things that may positively or negatively affect goal achievement. Each goal has one or more explanatory paragraphs that give background, detail, and other information useful to help the reader understand the goal as well as how the goal will be accomplished and measured. After these goal explanations, there is an overview of how results will be measured. We have also included a list of employees who prepared this plan and who we consulted with in its development.

In addition to this annual performance plan, we also use internal management documents to guide daily operations throughout the year. They detail the specific activities, services, and products that will be carried out or produced to accomplish goal results, and the dollars and people that will do it.

Weir Farm National Historic Site

The Weir Farm National Historic Site is a vital part of America's national system of parks, monuments, battlefields, recreation

areas, and other natural and cultural resources. Established by Act of Congress in 1990, Weir Farm is located in the towns of Wilton and Ridgefield, Connecticut. Containing 68.2 acres, the park preserves the summer home and workplace of Julian Alden Weir (1852-1919), a leading figure in American art and the development of American Impressionism, an art movement seen by many as the first modern art movement in America.

The house, studio, farm buildings and landscape that were integral to Weir's artistic vision survive at the site and are largely intact, making it the finest remaining landscape of American Impressionism. Weir Farm is a valuable part of America's heritage, enjoyed by approximately 16,000 visitors each year. Please see our strategic plan for more information about Weir Farm NHS.

The National Park Service

The National Park Service (NPS), established in 1916, preserves outstanding examples of the best of America's natural, cultural, and recreational resources for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. These resources of national significance constitute a significant part of America's heritage, character, and future. The National Park System consists of approximately 388 park units located in nearly every state and territory of the nation. The National Park Service not only directly preserves these treasures; it also makes them available to millions of visitors from throughout the country and the world every year. NPS also has legislated responsibilities for natural and cultural resource conservation outside national parks in partnership with state and local governments, tribes, and non-profit organizations. These programs provide a variety of technical and/or financial assistance.

In consultation with Congress, OMB and other interested parties, the NPS developed its own implementation process to comply with the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA). Using an 8-step process, the NPS developed its first Strategic Plan in 1997. A copy of the current plan is available for review at Weir Farm National Historic Site and on the internet at <http://www.nps.gov/planning>.

As part of its GPRA implementation process, the NPS decided that each of its component parks, programs, and offices would develop and submit their own Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Plans, and Annual Performance Reports. These plans address applicable long-term goals in the NPS Strategic Plan and may add goals specific to their own legislative mandates, missions, resources, visitor services, and issues needs. The local plans are generally a blend of national and local missions and goals.

The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA)

This Annual Performance Plan is written in part to fulfill the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). Congress passed this law in 1993 to bring the federal government into the "performance management revolution." Performance management is a goal-driven management concept and practice already widely adopted by the private sector, state and local governments, and many others. GPRA requires federal agencies to develop 1) a Strategic Plan, 2) Annual Performance Plans, and 3) Annual Performance Reports in order to more effectively and efficiently manage their activities to achieve their missions, and to more effectively communicate with the Congress and the American people. Please see our Strategic Plan for more information about GPRA and performance management.

II. MISSION

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the National Park Service at Weir Farm NHS to 1) preserve and interpret the buildings, landscape, and objects which together form a place of central importance to the art of Julian Alden Weir and the American Impressionist movement; and 2) to provide for the continuation of the site's artistic tradition.

III. STRATEGIES: Accomplishing Goals

We plan to accomplish our goals using the organization, facilities, and financial resources summarized below. These should give the staff, partners, stakeholders, and the public a better understanding of what we are trying to accomplish and how we plan to do it.

Organization

Superintendent Randy W. Turner leads the park staff. Current staff is organized into three operating divisions: resource management & maintenance, visitor services and collections management, and administration. Staff positions include an administrative officer and a part time temporary administrative clerk, facility manager, chief of visitor services/collections management, one permanent ranger, one permanent guide, and two intermittent seasonal guides. Two part-time, term museum

technicians provide curatorial expertise. The park also has a permanent horticulturist, gardener, and woodcrafter, as well as a seasonal laborer.

Staff support and assistance will be provided for Weir Farm during Fiscal Year 2003 by other National Park Service offices, including the Northeast Regional Office (NER) in Philadelphia, the Boston Support Office, the NER Cultural Resource Center, the Northeast Museum Services Center, the NER Building Conservation Branch (BCB), the NER Development Office, the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, Harpers Ferry Center (HFC), and the Denver Service Center (DSC). Other parks in the region, such as Cape Cod National Seashore, Lowell National Historic Site, and Minuteman National Historic Site, provide assistance with our administrative and other park functions. The BCB and the DSC have been and will continue to be critically important in providing project management and technical architectural and engineering services in FY03 as proposed one-year and Line Item projects are implemented.

In FY 02, in the partnership with the Weir Farm Trust, we began archeology work for the rehabilitation of the caretaker's garage. The Trust is funding this rehabilitation and the NPS is overseeing compliance in close coordination with the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office. We have also selected an architectural and engineering firm and have begun the planning process for the design for new museum storage, maintenance and administration facilities to be built on the approximately 9-acre parcel of land containing the Westervelt house. The NER Lands Office is handling negotiations for one remaining parcel of privately owned land.

The park, in partnership with Harpers Ferry Center audiovisual department, who is overseeing the contract, has begun work on a new site video. Last fiscal year, a segment of the park website aimed at educators and students was also upgraded through a Parks As Classroom grant.

In addition, Weir Farm receives invaluable support from its primary partner, the Weir Farm Trust. This past fiscal year, the Trust has conducted visitor programs, events, and art workshops and has continued to operate the Weir Farm Visiting Artist and Artist-in-Residence programs. In addition, in FY 02, the Trust administered a pilot outreach education program called "Brushes with History" in the Danbury, CT public school system. The Trust also held a fund-raising gala and art auction, which netted \$70,000. This year, the Trust will focus on raising funds to rehabilitate the caretaker's garage outbuilding into functional artists' studios.

Other key partners through the year may involve the Open Space Committees of the Towns of Ridgefield and Wilton, the Nature Conservancy, the Public Land Corps, the Norwalk River Watershed Association, the University of Connecticut, the Housatonic Valley Planning Authority, and two Connecticut tourism agencies into whose territory the park falls. The park also anticipates exploring closer connections with other art and museum educational organizations whose mission and story relate to ours, including the Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art in Ridgefield and fellow sites on the Connecticut Impressionist Art Trail.

Facilities

Park facilities for accomplishing the FY 2003 annual goals include a 60-acre cultural landscape with a mile of trails and the Weir Pond Dam; 16 historic buildings; and a temporary visitor center in the Burlingham House with a photographic exhibit, interpretive video, multimedia presentation, and gift shop. A maintenance and curatorial facility is housed in rented space, 2.5 miles from the park.

Financial Resources

Financial resources available to achieve the park's goals include a base operating budget of approximately \$767,900, which funds a work force of eleven permanent, two term, and two seasonal positions. This work force will be supplemented by approximately 1200 hours of volunteers-in-parks service and special project and program funds distributed by the National Park Service regional and Washington offices.

In FY03 the park is listed for several fee demonstration and regular/cultural cyclic projects. Achieving our goal performance targets is critically dependent on our base funding and on these additional project funds, volunteer assistance, partnerships and donations. In order to plan and organize goals and the work to accomplish them, major alternative sources of support and funding will be needed in the future. The park has submitted an operating increase request, which will be critical in fulfilling any future long-term goals and development.

Highlights of the park's budget, which funds specific goals in this annual performance plan, include:

- **\$400,501 for natural and cultural resource preservation and management. (all I goals)**
- **\$367,391 to address visitor understanding, safety, and services (all II goals)**

IV. KEY EXTERNAL FACTORS

Continuing contacts with the town of Ridgefield and its Planning and Zoning Commission and park neighbors will be critical in 2003 as the park plans for the development of a new maintenance/administrative facility and potential interior rehabilitation of the Westervelt House into curatorial offices and storage. Park legislation requires the National Park Service to obtain agreement from the town before development on these properties. Since road work and parking will be part of the future complex, with later development of a visitor center, close communication with the town and impacted park neighbors will be necessary, particularly for the environmental compliance process.

The park also has received funding for a pedestrian walkway to improve visitor safety, since visitors must currently walk on a dangerously narrow road into the core historic complex. The park has consulted with town officials and the walkway is slated to be in place by the spring of 2003.

An environmental assessment for a new museum storage, administration, and maintenance facilities to be built on the above-mentioned 9-acre site (not part of the historic core) will entail consultation with federal, state, and local entities affected by the project.

Currently, the park has no directional signs on the highways, and extremely limited and inadequate signage on local streets. This has caused visitor confusion and complaints. Initial efforts to work toward ameliorating this situation will be undertaken this fiscal year.

Key to operations in the coming year will be whether the park maintenance/curatorial operation will be allowed to remain at a rented facility in Georgetown (Redding), Connecticut. New owners have recently purchased this facility. At this time, it seems that our occupancy of the Wire Mill will continue despite the ownership change, at least until our new administration, museum storage and maintenance facilities are constructed. This year, we will consult with Redding town officials concerning long-term plans for our presence in that area.

V. GOALS

Goal Categories, Mission Goals, and Long-term Goals

The efforts under four goal categories and broad, "in perpetuity" mission goals that state ideal future conditions encompass all we do. Long-term goals, developed for each Strategic Plan period,

move us toward mission goals. Annual goals (in the next section) are the current year's increments toward achieving long-term goals. They are listed by Goal Category, Mission Goal, and Long-term Goal. Please see our Strategic Plan for more details on our mission and mission goals.

Annual Goals

Below are the Weir Farm NHS annual goals for fiscal year FY 2003 -- October 1, 2002 through September 30, 2003. The numbering sequence follows that of the NPS Strategic plan. Goal numbers may not be consecutive - where numbers are left out, there was no local goal matching the NPS goal. Goal categories and mission goals are in regular type. *Long-term goals are italicized.*

Annual goals are in bold type.

Goal Category I Preserve Park Resources

Ia Natural and cultural resources and associated values are protected, restored and maintained in good condition and managed within their broader ecosystem and cultural context.

Ia1B Exotic Species - By September 30, 2005 exotic vegetation at Weir Farm NHS is contained on 8 of 30 acres (26%) of park lands identified by September 30, 1999 as impacted by exotic vegetation.

Ia1B Exotic Species - By September 30, 2003, exotic vegetation at Weir Farm NHS is contained on 7 of 30 (23%) acres of park lands identified by September 30, 1999 as impacted by exotic vegetation

Ia4 Water quality - By September 30, 2005, Weir Farm NHS has unimpaired water quality.

Ia4 Water Quality - By September 30, 2003, Weir Farm NHS has unimpaired water quality.

Ia5 Historic Structures - By September 30, 2005, 79% of the historic structures listed on the Weir Farm NHS 1999 List of Classified Structures are in good condition (37 of 47 structures).

Ia5 Historic Structures - By September 30, 2003, 79% of the historic structures listed on the Weir Farm NHS List of Classified Structures are in good condition (37 of 47 structures).

Ia6 By September 30, 2005, 200 of 377 (53%) of preservation and protection standards for Weir Farm NHS museum collections are met.

Ia6 By September 30, 2003, 192 of 377 (51%) of preservation and protection standards for Weir Farm NHS museum collections are met.

In FY 2003, the curatorial staff will continue to work on monitoring the environment in which museum objects are kept and improving housekeeping. Additionally, management and curatorial staff will participate in planning the new museum storage facility.

Ia07 By September 30, 2005, 1 of 3 (33%) of Weir Farm NHS cultural landscapes not on the National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) as of the end of FY 1999 (and/or on the FY99 CLI but without condition assessment) are in good condition.

Ia07 By September 30, 2003, 1 of 3 (33%) of Weir Farm NHS cultural landscapes not on the National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) as of the end of FY99 (and/or on the FY99 CLI but without condition assessment) are in good condition.

Ib. The National Park Service contributes to knowledge about natural and cultural resources and associated values; management decisions about resources and visitors are based on adequate scholarly and scientific information.

Ib01 By September 30, 2005, 7 of 9 (78%) of Weir Farm NHS primary natural resource inventories identified in a Resource Management plan and General Management Plan are completed.

Ib01 By September 30, 2003, 6 of 9 (66%) of the Weir Farm NHS primary natural resource inventories identified in a Resource Management plan and General Management Plan are completed.

Ib2D By September 30, 2005, the number of Weir Farm NHS museum objects catalogued into the National Park Service Automated National Catalog System (ANCS+) and submitted to the National Catalog is increased by 3% (from FY 1999 baseline of 187,546 to 193,881).

1b2D By September 30, 2003, the number of Weir Farm NHS museum objects cataloged into the National Park Service Automated National Catalog System (ANCS+) and submitted to the National Catalog is increased by 3% to 201,797.

This past year, we had a large accession of archival materials and therefore exceeded our 02 target. Therefore, we have increased our target for the long-term goal of 05 and for this fiscal year accordingly, looking to increase our current number of objects by 3% in both cases. It is anticipated that the collection will continue to grow, through donations from the Weir Farm Trust and other sources, but it is impossible to predict to what extent. Curatorial staff members will continue to accession and catalog new acquisitions in a timely fashion, and management will work with the Northeast Cultural Resources Center to obtain our outstanding archeology records.

Ib2F By September 30, 2005, the Weir Farm NHS Historic Resource Study (HRS) and Administrative History are completed to professional standards, current (approved since 1980) and entered in CRBIB.

Ib2F By September 30, 2003, the Weir Farm NHS Historic Resource Study (HRS) is completed to professional standards.

In FY 2003, Weir Farm staff members will continue to provide research and editorial input to the contractors assigned to the Historic Resource Study. Work in FY 2003 by the contractor will include completion of the first draft report.

Ib3 By September 30, 2005, Weir Farm NHS has identified its vital signs for natural resource monitoring.

Ib3 By September 30, 2003, Weir Farm will not have identified all of its vital signs for natural resource monitoring.

In FY 2003, Weir Farm's horticulturist will continue to work with the NPS Northeast Region Inventorying & Monitoring Coordinator to plan for the identification of the site's vital.

Goal Category II Provide for the Public Use and Enjoyment and Visitor Experience of Parks

IIa Visitors safely enjoy and are satisfied with the availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of park facilities, services, and appropriate recreational opportunities.

IIa1 By September 30, 2005, 93% of visitors to Weir Farm NHS are satisfied with appropriate park facilities, services, and recreational opportunities.

IIa1 By September 30, 2003, 93% of visitors to Weir Farm NHS are satisfied with appropriate park facilities, services, and recreational opportunities.

In fiscal year 2002, we exceeded our visitor satisfaction rating target by 3%. Accordingly, we have raised our target for this fiscal year. We will continue to work toward increasing visitor satisfaction this year by completing visitor restrooms as part of the Burlingham barn restoration, and also working on parking options.

IIa2 By September 30, 2005, the number of visitor accidents/incidents at Weir Farm NHS is no higher than the baseline rate of 0 (FY 1992 - FY 1996 five-year annual average).

IIa2 By September 30, 2003, the number of visitor accidents/incidents at Weir Farm NHS is no higher than the baseline rate of 0 (FY 1992- FY 1996 five-year annual average).

IIb Park visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of resources for this and future generations.

IIb1 By September 30, 2005, 90% of visitors to Weir Farm NHS understand the significance of the park.

IIb1 By September 30, 2003, 90% of visitors to Weir Farm NHS understand the significance of the park.

In fiscal year 2002, we did not meet our visitor understanding goal of 90%. We will continue to hold 90% as a target, and continue to work on expanding and deepening our visitor education programs and ensuring that the visitor surveys are distributed correctly.

Goal Category IV Ensure Organizational Effectiveness

IVa The National Park Service uses current management practices, systems, and technologies to accomplish its mission.

IVa3A By September 30, 2005, 100% of Weir Farm NHS employee performance plans are linked to appropriate strategic and annual performance goals and position competencies.

IVa3a By September 30, 2003, 100% of Weir Farm NHS employee performance plans are linked to appropriate strategic and annual performance goals and position competencies.

Every supervisor at Weir Farm NHS is responsible for meeting with their employees regarding critical results and linking them specifically to park goals for each employee. Employees should understand the park's strategic plan and their role in implementing it. Documentation for each employee's critical results and supervisor certification will ensure that the FY03 goal is met.

IVa6A By September 30, 2005 the number of Weir Farm NHS employee lost-time injuries is maintained at the FY 1992 - FY 1996 five-year annual average of 0.

IVa6A By September 30, 2003, the number of Weir Farm NHS employee lost-time injuries is decreased to its FY 1992 - FY 1996 annual average of 0.

Weir Farm NHS has maintained an excellent safety record. However, this year, one employee contracted Lyme disease from a tick bite incurred on the job. Our efforts to educate staff about job safety continue. In addition, this year, the new park safety officer went to safety officer training and a safety plan is under development.

IVa6B By September 30, 2005 the number of Weir Farm NHS hours of Continuation of Pay is maintained at 0.

IVa6B By September 30, 2003 the number of Weir Farm NHS hours of Continuation of Pay is decreased to 0.

As mentioned in text under goal Iva6A, the employee who contracted Lyme disease also incurred continue of pay hours. However, we will continue to strive to keep our employee safety record above average.

IVb The National Park Service increases its managerial capabilities through initiatives and support from other agencies, organizations, and individuals.

IVb1 By September 30, 2005, the number of Weir Farm NHS volunteer hours is increased to 3095.

Ivb1 By September 30, 2003, the number of Weir Farm NHS volunteer hours is increased to 1200.

The park is fortunate to have a dedicated and long-term volunteer force. In fiscal year 2002, we did not meet our target for volunteer hours, mainly because the park did not hire a Student Conservation Association volunteer that year. We have revised our target accordingly to show a slight increase from 2002's 1177 hour total. Volunteer appreciation events will be continued to foster an exceptional working relationship. Success in FY03 will be measured by recruiting new volunteers, increasing the number of tasks that volunteers can perform, and making efforts to retain current volunteers and provide them with a quality volunteering experience.

IVb2b By September 30, 2005, the cash value of in-kind donations, grants, and services provided to Weir Farm NHS by the Weir Farm Trust and other organizations is increased from \$192,330 in FY97 to \$325,000 (69% increase).

Ivb2b By September 30, 2003, the cash value of in-kind donations, grants, and services provided Weir Farm NHS by Friend's groups and other organizations is at least \$292,000.

The Weir Farm Trust is undertaking a major fundraising effort for the park this year for rehabilitation of the Caretaker's Garage in addition to its normal programming and contributions. Park and Trust staff will coordinate joint efforts and programs for the year. Achievement of the performance target will be measured by whether the target funding figure is met or not.

VI. MEASURING RESULTS

Most park goals for Weir Farm NHS can be measured with standard tools appropriate to the particular goal—i.e., museum objects catalogued will be measured by the actual number of objects catalogued and numbered. Museum standards met outline specific requirements the park must meet. Volunteer hours maintained will be a counted hours figure.

Donations will be measured in actual dollars donated and diversity statistics in actual numbers hired.

Historic structures in good condition will be determined by the scope of work outlined and how work performed on structures has been implemented to contractual terms. Water quality has specific particulate and contaminant standards. Visitor safety is measured by actual number of incidents to meet the performance target and visitor satisfaction and understanding are determined by set survey methods. Number of performance plans linked to goals can also be statistically determined.

VII. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN PREPARERS

The following park staff members were involved in preparing this Annual Performance Plan:

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Randy Turner, Superintendent

The Weir Farm Trust is an essential partner in park programs and future development. Involvement and coordination by park staff with the Trust's Executive Director, staff and Board are ongoing.